

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 CU-02 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 IO-10

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SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05

ACDA-05 /085 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3253

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MADRID

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 11549

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, CSCE, UK
SUBJECT: BRITISH GOVERNMENT VIEWS ON CSCE SUMMIT

SUMMARY: HMG HAS BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF THAT STAGE II OF CSCE IS FINALLY COMPLETED. OFFICIALS WHO WORKED DIRECTLY ON NEGOTIATIONS TEND TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE OUTCOME. POLITICAL LEVEL IS MORE WARY FEARING THAT SOVIETS MIGHT TRY TO USE CSCE SUMMIT AS SPRINGBOARD FOR FURTHER PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES, POSSIBLY CALLING WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE (WDC). BRITISH EMPHASIS IN SUMMIT WILL BE THAT CSCE DECLARATION IS BEGINNING, NOT END IN ITSELF, PERFORMANCE OF ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT IN DETERMINING LONG RUN SIGNIFICANCE OF ENTIRE EFFORT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE BRITISH CSCE COMMUNITY, NOW EMBROILED IN PREPARING BRIEFS FOR THE SUMMIT, IS GENERALLY PLEASED WITH THE FINAL OUTCOME OF STAGE II. OFFICIALS FEEL THAT THE WEST NEED NOT BE ASHAMED OF THE FINAL TEXT BUT RATHER THAT THE PRESSURE WILL BE ON THE WARSAW PACT TO JUSTIFY WHAT EVERYBODY EXPECTS TO BE LESS THAN ADEQUATE PERFORMANCE UNDER ANY INTERPRETATION OF THE TEXTS DURING THE PERIOD BEFORE THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' REVIEW CONFERENCE IN 1977. MOST BRITISH OFFICIALS FEEL THAT THE FINAL WEEKS OF INTENSE ACTIVITIES IN GENEVA PRODUCED MORE CONCESSIONS BY THE USSR ON BASKET III ISSUES THAN THE WEST COULD HAVE EXPECTED. AS A RESULT THEY BELIEVE THAT THE ALLIES NEED NOT TAKE A DEFENSIVE ATTITUDE ABOUT THE CSCE DOCUMENTS BUT CAN CLAIM HONESTLY THAT SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN OPENING THE EAST TO PRESSURE FOR MORE LIBERAL POLICIES TOWARD THEIR OWN CITIZENS AND TO THE LEGITIMACY OF DISCUSSIONS ON THESE SUBJECTS WITH THE WEST.

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2. BRITISH OFFICIALS DO NOT EXPECT THAT THE USSR WILL MAKE DRAMATIC INITIATIVES AT THE SUMMIT. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL CHARACTERIZE CSCE AS A TRIUMPH FOR BREZHNEV'S POLICY FOR "PEACE" AND AS AN END OF A PERIOD OF TENSION RATHER THAN AS THE BEGINNING OF AN ERA IN WHICH EAST/WEST RELATIONS WILL BE IMPROVED. OFFICIALS CONCEDE THAT THE SOVIETS MAY SUGGEST THAT MORE PROGRESS

CAN NOW BE MADE IN DISARMAMENT; WITH POSSIBLE REFERENCE TO A WDC. BUT THEY BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL BE CAREFUL NOT TO COUCH THESE IDEAS IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE WEST WILL FEEL REQUIRED TO ANSWER IN HARSH TERMS. IN SUM, THE RUSSIANS WILL "PLAY IT COOL" AT THE SUMMIT.

3. THE BRITISH, AS FIRST SPEAKERS AT THE SUMMIT, WILL BE UNABLE TO COUNTER ANY SOVIET INITIATIVES. THE EMPHASIS IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH, IF THE FCO HAS ITS WAY, WILL BE THAT PERFORMANCE WILL BE THE TRUE TEST OF THE SUCCESS OF THE CSCE. THE DOCUMENTS THEMSELVES ARE CERTAINLY ACCEPTABLE BUT IT WILL BE ONLY IN THEIR IMPLEMENTATION THAT TRUE PROGRESS CAN BE MADE TOWARD BETTER RELATIONSHIPS IN EUROPE. THIS LINE IS AIMED AT PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE SOVIETS TO LIVE UP TO THE PRINCIPLES AND TO COUNTER ANY SENSE OF EUPHORIA IN THE WEST THAT PEACE HAS ARRIVED AT LAST. THE BRITISH WILL BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT SUCCESS IN REACHING AGREED TEXTS IN CSCE MEANS THAT THE WEST CAN, WITH IMPUNITY, CUT DEFENSE SPENDING FURTHER.

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4. WORKING LEVEL OFFICIALS IN FCO BELIEVE THAT IN LONG RUN RUSSIANS WILL HAVE MORE TROUBLE WITH CSCE TEXTS THAN THE WEST. THEY BELIEVE THE RUSSIANS WILL HAVE TO APPLY TORTURED INTERPRETATIONS OF MUCH OF THE LANGUAGE IN BASKET III IN ORDER TO CLAIM THAT THEY ARE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DECLARATION. THIS WILL PUT THEM ON THE DEFENSIVE AND SHOULD ENABLE THE ALLIES TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE ON CSCE FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES.

5. THE BRITISH BELIEVE THAT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MALTA, THIRD PARTY ACTIVITIES AT GENEVA WERE HELPFUL TO THE WEST. THEIR ONLY SPECIFIC CONCERN ABOUT THE CSCE TEXTS IS THAT THE MALTESE COMPROMISE ON THE MEDITERRANEAN IMPLIES SOME SORT OF MBFR FOR THE AREA. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE HANDLING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ISSUE WILL BE THE MOST DELICATE PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO THE 1977 FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE.

6. IT IS ONLY FAIR TO SAY THAT ALL BRITISH OFFICIALS DO NOT SHARE THE VIEWS REPORTED ABOVE. SOME OF THE MOST SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY COMMUNITY ARE VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT CSCE AND BELIEVE THAT THE WEST MUST BE EVEN MORE CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN ITS GUARD BECAUSE OF CSCE. THESE OFFICIALS SEE SOVIET ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING LEFT-WING ACTIVITIES IN PORTUGAL AND ANGOLA AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW LITTLE THE CSCE PRINCIPLES WILL MEAN. THEIR APPROACH IS TO BE PREPARED TO COUNTER ANY SOVIET USE OF CSCE FOR PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES WITH VIGOROUS ATTACKS ON POLICIES THAT INVOLVE SOVIET HEGEMONY IN EASTERN EUROPE OR RESTRICTIONS ON INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM IN
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THE USSR. THE WORKING LEVEL IN FCO IS PREPARING SPEECHES THAT TAKE THESE POINTS INTO CONSIDERATION BUT THEY HOPE THAT IT WILL NOT BE NECESSARY TO USE THEM AT THE SUMMIT.

7. IN SUM, WE EXPECT THE BRITISH TO PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE AT THE SUMMIT; EMPHASIZING THAT THE REAL MERIT OF CSCE WILL ONLY BE REVEALED AS WE OBSERVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION. THE BRITISH WOULD COUNTER-ATTACK SOVIET PROPAGANDA IN HARSH TERMS IF, FOR INSTANCE, THE SOVIETS PROPOSE SOME FURTHER DRAMATIC WORLD PEACE CONFERENCE BUT WILL HOPE THAT THE SUMMIT PASSES WITHOUT A REQUIREMENT TO ENGAGE IN POLEMICS WITH THE SOVIETS.

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